

(Milwaukee, WI)— Congresswoman Gwen Moore hosted a Youth Town Hall meeting on Saturday, “Real Talk About Real Issues,” to encourage young citizens to share with the community their thoughts, concerns, and needs in relation to the lives they lead and the struggles they face. Nearly 200 young people attended the town hall meeting at the Hillside Family Resource Center, and many were moved to tears by NBA player and Racine native Caron Butler of the Washington Wizards as he delivered his heartfelt keynote speech.

“Taking the time to meet and connect with our area’s youth is a small investment for what I hope will be a big payoff in terms of really understanding what the young people of Milwaukee need in order to get through the hardships in their lives,” said Congresswoman Moore. “If I can use my office to put young kids in contact with the programs and services that can improve their prospects, and if the panelists here can inspire these kids to hope for a brighter future, then the dialogue we start today will have been a success.”

The town hall meeting’s panelists and participants discussed the problems confronted by much of Milwaukee’s youth, such as teen pregnancy, increased neighborhood violence, barriers to education and high school drop-out rates, and the incarceration of a parent. Currently, Milwaukee has the second highest rate of teen pregnancy in the nation, as well as one of the lowest rates of graduation for high school students.

Jammin’ 98.3’s Andrea Williams served as moderator for the forum. Panelists included Dr. Quincy Tharps, UW-M professor and family therapist; teen mom Latonya Green; June Perry, CEO of the New Concept Self Development Center; Jobs for WI Program participant Angelica Atterbury; Ramon Candelaria, Executive Director of the Latino Community Center; Jayme Montgomery, a nursing student at Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC); and Antonio Perkins from the Campaign Against Violence.

Youth service agencies provided information and materials about their services to the attendees in an adjacent exhibit room in Hillside. Attendees were informed of the resources and services available to them that can assist youth in making their way on a safe and successful path in life.

The Hillside Family Resource Center is a part of the Hillside Terrace public housing project in Milwaukee. The Family Resource Center is a new addition to the Hillside development and includes a Boys and Girls Club, day care center, health clinic, and computer lab.

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